

ABOUT GROWTH

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Planning for natural hazard reduction

By Katherine Brooks

Senior Planner, Pierce County
Planning and Land Services Department

Comprehensive plan policies to reduce the effects of natural hazards

The *Pierce County Comprehensive Plan* contains a variety of policies that address natural hazard reduction.

These policies seek to avoid endangering lives within natural hazard areas by identifying and mapping hazardous locations and establishing land use controls and public outreach programs to minimize the dangers associated with building in these areas.

The comprehensive plan also includes some specific actions related to volcanic hazard areas and flood hazard areas including provisions for prohibiting critical facilities within these areas and installing a lahar warning system for volcanic hazard areas.

Implementation of comprehensive plan policies through critical area regulations

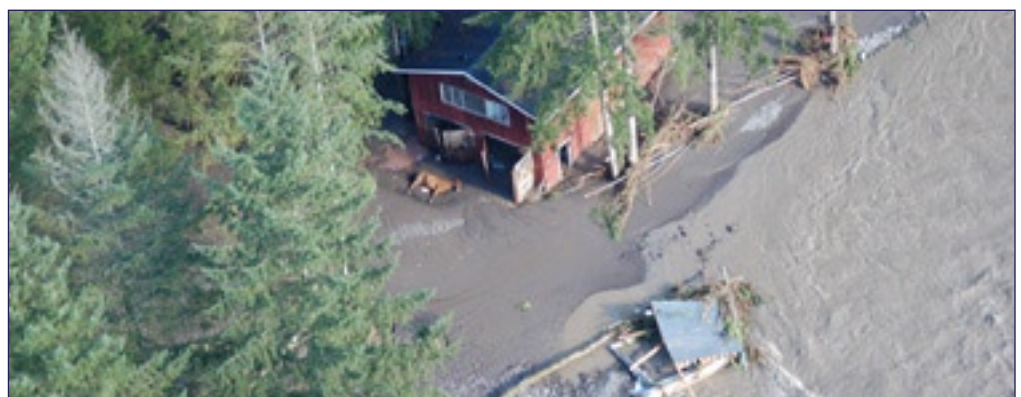
In 2001 Pierce County began the process of updating its critical area regulations, which were adopted in the fall of 2004 and became effective on March 1, 2005.

This update fulfilled the comprehensive plan policies to restrict critical facilities within volcanic and flood hazard areas. As a result of this update, the already good flood hazard regulations were strengthened to better address flood potential in channel migration zones and along Puget Sound coastal areas. All geologic hazard chapters (flood, volcanic, seismic, landslide, erosion, mines) were substantially updated to include new mapping for potential hazard areas, new report requirements, and new standards.

In addition to the regulatory aspect, several Pierce County departments are actively engaged in programmatic efforts to minimize the potential dangers from flood and volcanic hazard areas in the county or to help county residents when flooding occurs.

- The Public Works and Utilities Department-Water Programs Division administers the county's floodplain buyout program and manages capital improvement projects to reduce flooding within the county.
- The Department of Emergency Management has in the last decade

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Pierce County's flood hazard regulations address flood potential in channel migration zones and along Puget Sound coastal areas.

PHOTO / PIERCE COUNTY

ABOUT GROWTH

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Juli Wilkerson, CTED Director

The department administers the state's Growth Management Act. Its role is to assist and enable local governments to design their own programs to fit local needs and opportunities, consistent with the GMA.

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About Growth features topics that are of high interest and strives to reflect a wide range of views from various perspectives. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily the department's opinions or positions.

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Public safety is a key element of comprehensive planning



By Leonard Bauer
Managing Director,
Growth Management Services

When someone is looking for a community in which to live, they consider many factors – proximity to their work place, quality of schools, stability of property values, amount of traffic, and nearby amenities. These are all elements that contribute to the quality of life, and make a community desirable. Planners spend a great deal of time and effort focusing on these factors as they plan for a livable, vibrant community.

But our comprehensive plans don't often address one of the most basic necessities that a community needs to be a desirable place to live and work – safety. Public safety issues are often left to a separate document drafted by another department that may focus on only a very narrow aspect of community safety.

Yet if a community is perceived as not being a completely safe place for residents or not being a safe place for businesses and workers to engage in their day-to-day activities, people aren't likely to locate there. This perception can significantly damage the economy of a community or neighborhood, and must be addressed before any other elements of a plan can be successful.

Planning for public safety encompasses more than the traditional police and fire responsiveness issues. It also includes natural hazard mitigation and response, safe walking and bicycling routes, crime prevention, structural integrity, and protection of critical infrastructure (including systems for food, water, and electricity).

Helping our communities plan for a safe future is an essential foundation for their future livability and prosperity. Coordinating all the important elements of a community's strategy for the future in a comprehensive plan is the primary role of the planning profession. While public safety is not a required comprehensive plan element under the Growth Management Act, many Washington communities have chosen to incorporate public safety issues into their plans.

This issue of *About Growth* shares stories of how several Washington communities have addressed these issues directly in their comprehensive plans, development regulations, permitting, and public involvement processes. It also provides a information resources for planners.

The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development has a number of additional resources available to communities which address public safety issues. Growth Management Services' guidebooks, *Optional Comprehensive Plan Element for Natural Hazard Reduction* and *Critical Areas Assistance Handbook*, provide tools to address natural hazard avoidance and mitigation.

The Safe and Drug-Free Communities Unit assists communities in developing strategies against substance abuse and violence. The State Building Code Council focuses on structural integrity and safety. Infrastructure funding programs such as the Public Works Trust Fund help ensure the adequacy and integrity of critical infrastructure.

All of these programs can be accessed at www.cted.wa.gov.

Creating safe neighborhoods

By Diane Sugimura

Planning and Development Director, City of Seattle

Keeping our neighborhoods safe is one of Mayor Nickels' top four priorities, along with transportation, jobs, and strong families and communities.

As we continue to carry out our comprehensive plan and neighborhood plans, more "eyes on the street" are provided by: pedestrian friendly streetscapes, mixed-use development, more greenery and people places, and more people living in and near our commercial cores. These are key ingredients to creating vibrant and secure communities, both in our smaller neighborhoods, as well as in our more diverse and complex Center City neighborhoods. The greater the mix of uses and activities, the more people are walking, visiting, and shopping, the safer our neighborhoods.

Community people often ask us about using crime prevention through

Spokane's Safe Neighborhoods grant

By Lonnie M. Schaible, Ph.D.

**Assistant Professor of Sociology and Justice Studies,
Eastern Washington University**

In 2006 CTED awarded Spokane's Neighborhood Business Centers program the Safe Neighborhoods grant to develop a planning process to combat crime and stimulate economic development in the East Central neighborhood. The neighborhood is located adjoining the eastern edge of the city's Central Business District.

While the grant's intent was to pilot a process in Spokane's East Central neighborhood, what emerged was much more than anyone envisioned; a one-of-a-kind collaborative endeavor drawing on diverse resources and providing a holistic approach to urban planning for the 21st century.

The most crucial factor in the success of the East Central project was thorough examination of the causes of area problems from a diverse array of perspectives. Specifically, the grant team's effort to take a multimethod approach to understanding connections between relevant conditions greatly enriched the final product by looking at urban issues from a holistic perspective. Only through the involvement of stakeholders, crime prevention practitioners, law enforcement officials, urban planners, and social scientists did a clearer picture of the issues confronted by the neighborhood emerge laying a solid foundation for later problem-solving efforts.

Problem solving took on an equally interdisciplinary approach, strengthening the project and further establishing it as an example for urban planning. Specifically, instead of approaching the issue of development and urban blight in isolation – as an urban planner, as a police officer, as a business owner, as a resident, etc. – the initial problem analysis asked hard questions about what factors accounted for conditions in the area.

Out of these efforts emerged useful frameworks for explaining area issues, which drew on broad research, theory, and experience, including: community organization theories, policing theory and research, urban planning and environmental design principles, criminological

theory, and evidence grounded in the experiences of the area stakeholders. Only through drawing on this broad base did the practical recommendations and elements of the final proposal develop. Further, it allowed for the identification of resources and tactics that would address underlying conditions, and have the potential for utilization far beyond the grant funding.

Many neighborhood residents reflected the comments of one community stakeholder who said, "The Safe Neighborhood program involved the community residents in the reduction, prevention, and intervention of area crime."

Teri Cameron, planner/project manager, City of Spokane Development Incentives, Neighborhood Business Centers, also said the program has value. "The Safe Neighborhood program has given us tools, in addition to our comprehensive plan, to use in helping the neighborhood business centers tackle crime and perceived safety issues."

As a result of the program, the Spokane Police Department is working more closely with the neighborhood business centers in code enforcement, said Cameron. Dilapidated housing, trash, graffiti, and abandoned cars are being addressed more promptly. Cameron also notes that a Business Watch program is getting more organized.

Building on the successes and moving the Safe Neighborhoods program forward, a pilot Safety Ambassador program will be tested in the East Sprague Business Center through a \$15,000 grant from the Inland Northwest Community Foundation. Safety ambassadors increase the activity level in presence yet add an authoritative figure that elevates perceived safety.

For more information on Spokane's Safe Neighborhoods program, see www.spokanencb.org and click on Safe Neighborhoods. A workbook is available as a tool for communities that may be interested in using Spokane's process to set up a Safe Neighborhoods project.

A representative from Spokane is available to provide a workshop or other assistance on planning for Safe Neighborhoods. Call 509-625-6597.

APA's Safe Growth America

By James C. Schwab, AICP

**Senior Research Associate,
American Planning Association**

What do high crime rates, terrorism, industrial accidents, and floods have in common?

Aside from being things we perceive negatively, they all pose threats to the safety and security of our neighborhoods and communities. They also possess another common characteristic: They are all susceptible to spatial analysis and mitigation by urban planners. The dimensions, frequency, and potential severity all vary greatly both among themselves and from place to place. However, planners can learn the tools with which to reduce their impact on communities. As a result, planners have or can acquire tools with which to make their communities more resilient in the face of disaster.

Recognizing that potential, the American Planning Association (APA) began almost four years ago to build awareness of the need for safe growth through its Safe Growth America campaign. On its Web site, APA states:

The goal of Safe Growth America is to build environments that are safe for current and future generations of people and to protect structures, transportation and utility infrastructure, and the natural environment – including food systems – from damage.

Planners and policy makers must consider the sources of risk, such as geologic or weather-related natural hazards, technological hazards that generate pollution or poisons, terror, crime, and economic hardship.

It's the art of using planning to manage and minimize risk. The individual profile of a hazard will vary, but in each case planners have some ability to devise a way to help their communities survive and recover better than would be the case without planning. It's worth remembering that, in the pantheon of legal justifications for planning, public safety ranks at or near the top. It's one area where planners shouldn't be timid about asserting the public good.

Crime prevention through environmental design

By Officer Doug Reynolds, CPP, CPS
Community Crime Prevention Officer,
SeaTac Police Services

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is a proactive and collaborative approach to planning and development within the physical and social environment whose purpose is to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

The goal of CPTED is to anticipate and assess crime risk factors in the physical environment and reinforce neighborhood control of public spaces. CPTED focuses on the overall physical, psychological, and social conditions that influence and may prompt undesirable or criminal behavior.

CPTED is intended to be a prevention strategy, but may also be used in problem solving. CPTED is utilized to create an environment that is unfriendly to those intent on engaging in criminal activity and friendly to those who wish to live in peace.

CPTED principles are divided into three categories: First generation principles and first generational advanced principles that focus mainly on the physical environment and second-generation principles, which focus on social change.

First-generation CPTED principles

Surveillance or “more eyes on the street”: Creating areas where people and their activities can be readily observed, improving sight lines, giving an offender the impression that they are being watched.

Access control: Making movement patterns more predictable by designing entry and exit points to make it more difficult for offenders to target victims, as well as not forcing people into entrapment areas where they can easily become victims.

Territoriality: Making space defensible; clearly defining public and private space.

Image and maintenance or the “broken windows theory”: Ensuring that a property’s physical appearance is well maintained in order to discourage

criminal activity. Encouraging ownership and good aesthetics.

First generation advanced CPTED principles

Conflicting user groups: Reducing or easing conflict between potentially incompatible users of physical space.

Crime generators: Offsetting crime that may be generated by local activity nodes.

Activity support: Using designed or developed features that attract legitimate users or activities to a building or space in order to reduce crime opportunities.

Land usage: Ensuring compatible land uses. Eliminating “hard edges.”

Movement predictors: Mitigating predictable or unchangeable routes or paths that offer no choice for pedestrians.

Second-generation CPTED principles

Neighborhood cohesion: Encouraging participation and responsibility among neighborhood residents.

Community culture: Developing a shared sense of place and history.

Neighborhood threshold: Ensuring balanced growth among the diverse elements in a neighborhood.

Connectivity: Strengthening commu-

nity bonds, both internal and external, to the neighborhood.

Risk assessment

In order for any CPTED strategy to be successful, the nature of the crime or safety related issue must be carefully and accurately defined through a risk assessment. In a risk assessment, a wide variety of data is collected and considered to allow for an accurate portrayal of issues. This allows for a more effective solution or action plan to be developed. The assessment process is critical to the success of a CPTED strategy because both obvious and underlying problems are addressed.

The bottom line

Properties that effectively incorporate CPTED principles attract quality residents and tenants and show an increase in property values. Managers, residents, and tenants benefit from increased safety and an increased sense of safety. Police benefit from crime prevention and the reduction in the number and types of calls for service.

I offer CPTED training. If you would like to arrange a training session for your office or group or attend training, call me at 206-973-4904.

Creating safe neighborhoods

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

environmental design (CPTED) strategies as a method of helping to maintain safe neighborhoods. They wonder if we ever consider these concepts as we review development proposals.

Many principles for achieving a great city are consistent with the CPTED concepts and the desire for a safe, attractive city. Depending on how some of the CPTED strategies are applied, however, one could be working against the type of community we want to create. Lights can be too bright; landscaping too low; results can be austere (“hardened and defensible”), which is why we prefer to work at creating great places that attract people first and foremost.

In Seattle, perhaps the strongest opportunity for implementing CPTED strategies occurs during our design review process for new buildings.

For projects that aren’t required to go through the design review process, we have adopted development standards that support good design and quality, safe environments, such as transparency requirements at the street level in some zones, or design features that help to activate the street front.

Neighborhood design guidelines that overlap with CPTED strategies include items such as streetscape compatibility, entrances visible from the street, human activity, human scale, design of parking lots near sidewalks, and personal safety and security (this guideline specifically mentions consideration of CPTED principles). Downtown design guidelines also include elements such as promote pedestrian interaction, provide active not blank facades, and provide inviting and usable open space.

The use of crime prevention techniques in SeaTac

By Officer Doug Reynolds, CPP, CPS
Community Crime Prevention Officer,
SeaTac Police Services

The City of SeaTac Development Review Committee (DRC) process provides an opportunity for city staff to meet with development applicants to identify and discuss regulations and requirements specific to an individual project. DRC meetings are free of charge.

Prior to project submittal, the applicant meets simultaneously with staff from the city's Building Division, Engineering Division, Fire Department, Police Department, and Planning and Community Development Department. Representatives from other affected jurisdictions, agencies, or special districts may also attend meetings. The applicant or the city may request additional, informal DRC meetings if necessary.



Well-lit lobbies help to reduce crime by eliminating places where attackers can linger.

PHOTO / LATCH

City staff prepares comments in a checklist form. If possible, comments are provided to the applicant at the end of the DRC meeting. Substantial comments will be mailed to the applicant, usually within two weeks.

First, the committee looks at the SeaTac Municipal Code to see if the type of project being proposed is allowed in the zone where the project is to be located.

Next, the regulations of all the departments are discussed. We want people to come in early in the process before they could get headed down the wrong path and needlessly expend funds for design.

At the direction of the city council, I've been a member of the DRC for SeaTac since 1998. During the meetings, I make recommendations on crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).

For more than eight years, SeaTac has had regulations related to crime prevention in our municipal code in sections related to property. For example, we have multifamily design standards, SMC 15.19, and other site-specific standards for structures such as gas stations and convenience stores.

In 2003 our CPTED code was adopted. See www.ci.seatac.wa.us, click on Municipal Code then Title 17 for more information.

In our code, we mandate how

buildings are built and landscaping is created in relation to CPTED. I am the person who is responsible for determining if developers are in compliance with the code. As a police officer, I follow projects from conception through design to final inspection and the issuance of the certificates of occupation.

Our code has minimum and maximum lighting standards. Lighting is the single most important CPTED concept that a city can mandate. The need for minimum lighting is obvious. Maximum lighting standards are set so no glare and shadows are created where attackers could hide.

For commercial buildings, design needs to be considered in relation to workplace violence. Vision panels – windows – need to be part of building security. They should be included in every conference room, lunchroom, and training room so people can see what's happening in the rooms. Vision panels also are needed at entrances and exits. Workers who can't see out of a door at night may be subject to attack when they step out.

A number of corporations use CPTED as part of their corporate risk management programs to reduce company risk.

For developments with five or more homes, we have requirements for landscaping and trees. For landscaping,

ground cover needs to be no more than three feet tall and deciduous trees need to be pruned so there is more than seven to eight feet to the lowest limbs. This creates a "window" that you can see through. If you have tall rhododendrons or landscaping, it obscures your opportunity to see and be seen. You can't "keep an eye on things." These requirements are in the in the landscape code, not Title 17.



Windows overlooking sidewalks offer the opportunity for residents to observe what's happening on the streets.

PHOTO / LATCH

Multi-Hazards Roundtable offers new ideas, networking

Many people attend conferences and other gatherings to discuss issues in the spaces between the formal agenda – but what if you could dispense with the conference altogether and really dive into issues with colleagues interested in the same topic? This is why the Multi-Hazards Roundtable was created.

The Multi-Hazards Roundtable offers an opportunity for practitioners to exchange and learn new ideas about the emerging field of emergency management and for university researchers to ground their research conclusions with a dose of reality. The Washington State Emergency Management Association, Cascadia Region Earthquake Workgroup, and the University of Washington Department of Urban Design and Planning and Institute for Hazards Mitigation sponsor the roundtable.

Offered quarterly at the University of Washington in Seattle, the roundtable has discussed such diverse topics as climate change, risk analysis and risk communication, recovery and vulnerable populations, rivers and floodplains, and levees as liabilities and community assets.

The next roundtable is scheduled for March 7, 2007, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The topic is insurance, and the industry's impact on risk reduction and community recovery.

For information, see <http://depts.washington.edu/hazards/index.shtml> or contact Sue Letsinger at letsing@u.washington.edu.

Community mobilization promotes safe neighborhoods

By Paul Perz
Manager, CTED's Safe and Drug-Free Communities Unit

CTED's Community Mobilization Program provides grant funds to all 39 counties to develop and implement community strategies to reduce substance abuse and violence. It brings together a cross section of community members to build and support healthy individuals, families, and safe communities by cross-system efforts that emphasize collaboration, cooperation, communication, commitment, and cultural competency.

In each county, a local community mobilization policy board acts as the governing body to promote local decision making and control.

Services funded by community mobilization build on current efforts or create new efforts to make the most effective use of scarce resources to carry out the community's strategy against substance abuse and violence.

Examples of community efforts undertaken by community mobilization include:

- Developing Meth Action Teams in

each county to coordinate cross system strategies to reduce Methamphetamine abuse and related health and safety impacts.

- Facilitating block-by-block organizing activities.
- Offering youth mentoring, parent education, and support.
- Providing classes in anger management and conflict resolution skill building.
- Offering programs in alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, education, and treatment.
- Offering after-school recreational and tutoring programs.
- Providing life skills training.

CTED's Community Mobilization Program is part of the Local Government Division's Safe and Drug-Free Communities Unit. Other unit programs include Multi-Jurisdiction Drug Taskforces, Governor's Council on Substance Abuse, and smaller grant programs for crime and drug abuse prevention.

For information, see www.cted.wa.gov/sdfc or contact me at 360-725-3025.

Planning for natural hazard reduction

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

completed installation of a Mount Rainier lahar warning system for the Puyallup and Carbon river systems. This department is also actively working with other jurisdictions to develop natural hazard mitigation plans.

- During recent flooding events, the Public Works and Utilities Department-Solid Waste Division provided emergency garbage collection service to help residents dispose of household goods and components of building structures that were damaged by water.

All these efforts serve to implement the comprehensive plan policies to decrease the potential threats to life and

property from these most dangerous areas in the county.

Successes and lessons learned

The process that the county pursues for natural hazard reduction is adaptive and continually evolving. Some aspects of the new critical area regulations have yet to be realized, but placeholders were established for future implementation.

For example, the Seismic Hazard Chapter of the code has language pertaining to seismic fault rupture hazard areas, but this section will remain reserved until the county obtains fault rupture hazard area mapping from federal and/or state agencies. And critical area mapping is always being updated with new flooding event information or completed studies.

Olympia's bicycle and pedestrian programs

By Sophie Simpson
Planner, City of Olympia

Olympia voters recently approved a funding measure for nearly \$1 million per year for sidewalks, a more than six-fold increase in sidewalk funding.

Bike lanes on 70 percent of arterial streets have made it easier for people to bike to work, reflected in the 107 percent increase in bicycle commuting between 1990 and 2000.

Since the mid-1990s momentum for walking and biking has increased in Olympia. Programs for sidewalk, bike lanes, and pedestrian crossing improvements are creating a safer and inviting multimodal network.

Sidewalk planning

In 2003 citizen volunteers completed an inventory of missing sidewalks on high-volume arterials, major collector, and neighborhood collector streets. Out of 156 total miles, 84 miles were missing sidewalks. At the current funding level, this need would take the city 180 years to complete.

In 2004 a funding measure was placed on the ballot for parks and recreational facilities. Prior surveys had shown walking was the community's most popular form of active recreation.

Voters approved an increase to the private utility tax and as a result, approximately \$1 million annually is dedicated to sidewalk construction.

The projects built with these revenues are drawn from the 2003 inventory and focus on connecting to parks, schools, and trails.

The objective of Olympia's sidewalk construction is to provide a sidewalk on one side of as many major streets as possible. Ideally, the sidewalk is set back from the street with a strip of vegetation, providing a buffer for pedestrians. If the sidewalk must be against the street, a curb is used, and additional width is added to the sidewalk for safe shy distance, the space left between vehicles or pedestrians as they pass each other.

Pedestrian crossings

Crossing improvements work in concert with sidewalks to create more complete walking routes. For pedestrians, crossing a street with high vehicle volumes and speeds can be daunting, and an obstacle to making even a short trip by foot. Among the types of improvements are:

- In-pavement crosswalk lighting to warn motorists when a pedestrian is present.
 - Bulbouts of the sidewalk at intersections, making the crossing distance shorter, and increasing the visibility of pedestrians to drivers.
 - Refuge islands between opposing lanes of traffic, allowing pedestrians to cross half of the roadway at a time.
- A screening tool is used to evaluate

and prioritize the crossings. Thresholds for motor vehicle speeds and volumes, and the number of lanes on a roadway are used to assess the relative need for improvement.

Bicycle Improvement Program

Olympia has built bike lanes on 70 percent of arterials and 33 percent of major collectors. Most of the bike lanes were built as part of restripe projects, where car lanes are narrowed or removed. Since 1997, 20 of the 30 miles of bike lanes in the city were built, primarily due to restriping.

Bike lanes are important on high-vehicle volume streets because they allow motor vehicle drivers and bicyclists to more predictably share the roadway with one another. Signing and markings are used where widening is not possible. For example, a "Share the Lane" sign and roadway markings are used for one block where historic trees would be impacted by widening for a bike lane.

Sidewalk repair

Olympia is exploring options for a more active role in repairing sidewalks. Cost sharing with property owners was explored, but ultimately the city council arrived at a decision to conduct a pilot program in which the city does the repair work.

The program focuses on potential hazards, as opposed to aesthetic repairs. About half of the damaged sidewalks are attributed to tree root problems, so urban forestry staff are involved in the pilot. Rubber sidewalk tiles were installed in two locations, where large trees grew next to the sidewalk. The rubber tiles allow city crews to dismantle the sidewalk, trim roots, re-level the surface, and reinstall the sidewalk.

An increasingly safer walking and biking network has allowed Olympia citizens to be more active and biking makes neighborhoods to be more vibrant. The higher densities envisioned in the *Olympia Comprehensive Plan* will work better as walking and biking become safe and inviting modes.



Olympia is adding new sidewalks due to the passage of a funding measure for nearly \$1 million a year for sidewalks.

PHOTO / CITY OF OLYMPIA

Preparing your natural hazard mitigation plan

By CTED and Emergency Management Division Staff

By now, most communities are aware of the requirement to develop a local mitigation plan for approval by the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Communities must have a FEMA-approved natural hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for federal mitigation programs, including those made available following a major disaster declaration by the President.

If your community needs help with how to develop a local mitigation plan or is working on its five-year update, here are tips to follow.

First, keep it simple. For the purposes of this plan, FEMA requires only the "best available data" as the basis of your plan, and the plan is limited to the natural hazards that impact your community. You don't need to fund new flood or engineering studies; you can use what data is already available. Examples include:

- Your current growth management comprehensive plan.
- Your GMA critical areas ordinance.
- Any existing natural hazard plans (Flood Control Assistance Account Program flood plans, for example).
- Shoreline management plans.

If you've developed a good critical areas ordinance, then you've already made a major effort in the right direction. When combined with information from your county Hazard Identification Vulnerability Assessment, you'll have much of the data needed to develop a compliant plan.

Additionally, there's a tremendous amount of material, such as maps and historical data, available on Web pages that can support your planning activities. Information is available from Web



The Emergency Management Division and CTED can help communities plan for natural hazard reduction to prevent damage from landslides.

Photo / CTED

sites of the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Ecology, and the Military Department's Emergency Management Division, as well as from the University of Washington and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Next, keep it focused. Concentrate on hazards your community is likely to experience. If earthquakes and floods are your most damaging natural hazards, focus your efforts on assessing these hazards and developing the appropriate mitigation strategies. If you want to include human-made and technological hazards, this could be included as part of your five-year update.

Engage the public in the process and keep them involved. A major part of the FEMA requirement for plan approval is an open public process. By including the public, you gain:

- Valuable insight into their perspectives of risks and hazards, as well as potential mitigation strategies.
- Resources such as volunteers to help you complete the plan.
- Early public buy-in to potential mitigation projects, helping to streamline your process in applying for mitigation grants.

Then, develop a planning process. Use what you have used before, what works

for your community. Once you have a process established, it's easier to add other communities (for a regional effort) or other hazards that come to your attention.

Here are links to counties with approved local hazard mitigation plans to help: www.skagitcounty.net, www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us, www.chelandem.org, www.co.pierce.wa.us.

Next, review a copy of the plan development checklist to get an idea of what is expected. Contact the Washington Military Department's Emergency Management Division (see below) to obtain a copy of the checklist as well as other planning guidance.

Then, develop mitigation actions and strategies. They are actions that will significantly reduce or eliminate the cost and impacts of the next disaster. Items such as amending plans, buying equipment for firefighters, and watching for rain are not mitigation actions. If you identify vulnerability to hazards in your community, you need to develop actions to eliminate or reduce the risk to that hazard.

Finally, ask questions. The Emergency Management Division will help you as you develop your local plans. Call Mark Stewart at 253-512-7072 or e-mail m.stewart@emd.wa.gov for information.



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